

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART

NEWS RELEASE

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SOVIET-INSPIRED WORK BY ROBERT RAUSCHENBERG AT NATIONAL GALLERY

Washington, D.C., June 5, 1990 - Work created by Robert Rauschenberg for the 1989 exhibition of his Rauschenberg Overseas Culture Interchange (R.O.C.I.) in Moscow will go on display on the mezzanine of the National Gallery's East Building Wednesday, June 6, director J. Carter Brown announced today. The 14 works, a series of color photogravures entitled Soviet/American Array I - VII, 1988, and a series of sewn fabric collages with silkscreening entitled Samarkand Stitches Number 1 - 7, 1988, were inspired by trips Rauschenberg made to the U.S.S.R. and will remain on view through the summer. The photogravures are promised gifts of the artist and the fabric collages are promised gifts of Gemini G.E.L. and the artist to the National Gallery.

"This display underscores the special relationship and ongoing collaboration of the National Gallery with the Soviet Union, and our continuing interest in Robert Rauschenberg's most inventive R.O.C.I. project," said Mr. Brown.

R.O.C.I. was shown at the Central House of Artists, an extension of the State Tretyakov Museum in Moscow, February 1 through March 5, 1989. The show was so popular that Rauschenberg was invited by young Soviet artists to exhibit a painting in the Soviet pavilion at the 1990 Venice Biennale, currently on view.

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The seven framed color photogravures in the Soviet/American Array series are unusually large composite groupings of photo images, most measuring 88 inches high and 53 inches wide. In them Rauschenberg shows people, architecture, and objects such as food that evoke his impressions of the Soviet Union. Similarly, the free-hanging, double-sided sewn fabric collages with silkscreening, Samarkand Stitches Number 1-7, 1988, are of imposing size and contain multiple references to Soviet life. These works combine colorful swatches of traditional fabrics from the Transoxiana region of the Soviet Union, where Samarkand is located, and silkscreened photographs.

R.O.C.I. is an evolving, cumulative exhibition containing several hundred Rauschenberg paintings, sculptures, and photographs created over the last fifteen years. The artist's objective through R.O.C.I. is to promote world peace and understanding through examples of his art representing many cultures. For each stop on the tour Rauschenberg creates a suite of new works reflecting the host country's diverse cultural identities and his experiences there. Examples of each country group are shown subsequently at the National Gallery to celebrate the tour program.

R.O.C.I. is currently on display in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, the final stop on a world tour that has visited Mexico, Chile, Venezuela, China, Tibet, Japan, Cuba, the U.S.S.R., and East Germany. A culminating selection of works from the show will be on display at the National Gallery March 3 through June 16, 1991.